

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 00413 121124Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 0413

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

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TAGS: PFOR, RH
SUBJ: PATRIOTIC FRONT LEADERS ANNOUNCE COORDINATING COMMITTEE
TO MERGE FIGHTING CADRES

REF: LUSAKA 0405 (NOTAL)

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED
SUMMARY: PATRIOTIC FRONT (PF) LEADERS NKOMO AND MUGABE ANNOUNCED
IN LUSAKA FEBRUARY 11 THE FORMATION OF A TEN MAN COORDINATING
COMMITTEE CHARGED WITH FINDING THE WAYS AND MEANS TO BRING
TOGETHER THE FIGHTING CADRES OF ZAPU AND ZANU "WHICH HAVE
RETAINED THEIR IDENTITIES" UNDER THE PF UMBRELLA.
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PAGE 02 LUSAKA 00413 121124Z

SIMULTANEOUSLY THE LEADERS SAID THAT THEY WOULD NOT ATTEND
ANOTHER BRITISH SPONSORED CONFERENCE ON RHODESIA UNLESS THEY
WERE ASSURED OF BLACK MAJORITY RULE. NKOMO SAID THAT KAUNDA
HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE FORMATION OF THE PF. END SUMMARY.

1. SPEAKING AT A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE IN LUSAKA FEB 11,
PRIOR TO THEIR DEPARTURE FOR LUANDA AND MEETINGS WITH NETO,

ROBERT MUGABE AND JOSHUA NKOMO OF THE PF ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION OF A TEN MAN COORDINATING COMMITTEE. THIS COMMITTEE, WHICH IS TO HOLD ITS FIRST MEETING "WITHIN THE SHORTEST POSSIBLE TIME" WILL CARRY OUT ALL THE PROGRAMS OF THE PF AND "FIND WAYS AND MEANS OF BRINGING TOGETHER THE FIGHTING CADRES OF THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS (ZAPU AND ZANU) WHICH HAVE RETAINED THEIR SEPARATE IDENTITIES." THE COMMITTEE WILL AT TIMES WORK THROUGH SUB-COMMITTEES AND WILL HAVE FIVE ZAPU AND FIVE ZANU MEMBERS.

2. ANNOUNCED AS MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE FROM ZAPU ARE: JOSHUA NKOMO, JOSEPH MSIKA, GEORGE SILUNDIKA, JOHN NKOMO AND DUMISO DEBEBGWA, AND FROM ZANU: ROBERT MUGABE, MUHUNDE HAMADZRIPI, MUKUDWEI MUDZI, JOSIAH TONGOGARA AND RUGARE UMBO.

3. ALSO AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE MUGABE SAID THAT THE BRITISH KILLED THE GENEVA CONFERENCE AND UNLESS "THE BRITISH SHOW US SERIOUSNESS OF THE TRANSFER OF THE POWER TO THE MAJORITY WE SHALL NOT TALK TO THEM." NKOMO IS QUOTED AS SAYING: "WE WASTED TIME GOING TO THAT WEDDING CALLED GENEVA CONFERENCE." NKOMO, RESPONDING TO QUERIES ABOUT MUZOREWA'S CHARGES THAT KAUNDA WAS BEHIND THE FORMATION OF THE PF, REPLIED (REFTEL) "THE BISHOP IS A LIAR. WHEN PEOPLE FAIL TO ACHIEVE THEIR OBJECTIVES THEY GO FOR SCAPEGOATS."

4. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, MUGABE AND NKOMO DEPARTED FOR TALKS WITH NETO IN LUANDA. MUGABE WILL THEN GO ON TO WEST AFRICA AND NKOMO TO EUROPE.

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PAGE 03 LUSAKA 00413 121124Z

COMMENT: THE FORMATION OF THE PF COORDINATING COMMITTEE APPEARS TO BE A REACTION TO ALLEGATIONS THAT THE PF IS NOT UNITED, BUT ONLY A VERY LOOSE EXPEDIENT POLITICAL ALLIANCE BETWEEN MUGABE AND NKOMO WITH NO UNITY AT THE OPERATING MILITARY LEVEL. IF THE FRONT WISHES TO BENEFIT TO THE MAXIMUM FROM THE FRONTLINE STATES' ENDORSEMENT AND THE QUALIFIED ENDORSEMENT OF THE OAU LIBERATION COMMITTEE, SUCH ALLEGATIONS MUST BE QUASHED. JUST HOW MEANINGFUL THE COMMITTEE'S WORK WILL BE IS UNCERTAIN. ZAPU, ZANU DISTRUST AT ALL LEVELS, ESPECIALLY THE MILITARY, IS LONG STANDING AND ACUTE. NKOMO MAY HAVE BEEN STUNG BY RECENT ALLEGATIONS ABOUT KAUNDA BEING HIS MAKER (REFTEL). HIS HARSH CRITICISM OF THE BISHOP AS "A LIAR" WILL NOT MAKE EASIER ANY ATTEMPTS TO EXPAND THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE PF TO INCLUDE OTHER NATIONALIST FIGURES. END COMMENT
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LOW

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